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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 002741

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT,
FRIDAY, MAY 14, 2004

THIS REPORT WILL PRESENT A TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER
THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES
BRIEFING
EDITORIAL OPINION

HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL
Rumsfeld: Iraqi interrogation in line with Geneva Convention
- Sabah
Rummy in the house of torture - Hurriyet
US Congress debates official interrogation methods -
Milliyet
115 AKP lawmakers decline to vote for education bill -
Hurriyet
Gen. Wald wants Turkish troops for Afghanistan - Sabah
FM Gul: If necessary, troops will be sent to Afghanistan -
Sabah
Turkish troops to Afghanistan - Milliyet
OIC says 'yes' to northern Cyprus - Milliyet
Lebanese PM: 'TRNC' will be recognized in time - Turkiye
The return of the Gandhis - Hurriyet

OPINION MAKERS

Rumsfeld at Abu Ghraib - Cumhuriyet
US Congressmen shocked by torture photos - Yeni Safak
Torture not limited to Iraq - Radikal
Neighbors want an end to torture, occupation in Iraq - Zaman
Wash. Post: 82 percent of Iraqis want end to occupation -
Yeni Safak
EU slient on 'Imam Hatip' bill - Cumhuriyet
Greek Cypriot nationalists threaten Annan Plan supporters -
Radikal
Assad rejects US sanctions, supports Palestine - Zaman
World simply observes ongoing massacre in Palestine - Yeni
Safak
Gandhi Dynasty returns - Radikal
Gandhi Dynasty returns with Italian bride - Zaman

BRIEFING

Parliament approves education reform bill: The Parliament
approved a controversial education reform bill on Thursday
by a vote of 251-4. Main opposition Republican People's
Party (CHP) lawmakers left the parliament before the voting.
The AK Party proposal for easing restrictions on students
entering universities from religious vocational schools
(Imam Hatip) had drawn strong criticism from rectors,
secularist groups, and the military, all of whom fear that
the legislation will increase the influence of Islam in
education. Papers speculate that President Sezer will
likely veto the reform. If he does, the AK Party will
probably resubmit the bill to Sezer unmodified, and the law
will take effect. The President could then apply to the
Constitutional Court for annulment of the bill.
"Cumhuriyet" says that the education law is a counter-
revolutionary measure that discriminates in favor of
religious education schools. Pro-Islamic "Yeni Safak" says
the government is trying to reduce the injustice in the
education system through the law.

General Wald visits Turkey: FM Abdullah Gul said that
Turkey will send more troops to Afghanistan if necessary.
Gul made the comment during the visit of EUCOM deputy chief,

General Charles Wald. Ankara is evaluating General Wald's request for the deployment of 300 Turkish troops for the September elections in Afghanistan. In addition, the Council of Ministers will decide next week whether to send a team of military technicians and civilian city planning experts to Afghanistan in early July in order to establish a Provincial Reconstruction Team in Afghanistan's northeastern region of Takhar.

Torture in custody a 'common practice' in Turkey: Turks from various strata have voiced strong criticism of the abuses against Iraqi captives, but they have remained silent in the face of ongoing mistreatment of detainees at home, "Milliyet" reports. According to statistics compiled by the Human Rights Foundation, 770 detainees were tortured in Turkey in 2003 alone, but legal action was launched against just 33 policemen. Charges against 18 of the 33 were subsequently dropped. Meanwhile, Turkish dailies cite a New York Times story claiming that the CIA set up 'torture centers' in peripheral countries like Turkey, Egypt, India, Jordan, and Sudan for the interrogation of high-level Al-Qaeda militants in an effort to avoid the constraints of US law. Human Rights Watch (HRW) claims that detainees in Afghanistan have also been 'systematically' mistreated by American soldiers.

Cyprus: The Organization of Islamic Conferences (OIC) has decided to address the Turkish Cypriots as the 'State of Northern Cyprus' and to invite Turkish Cypriot representatives to meetings at the highest level. The decision, which will be formally adopted at the upcoming OIC ministers' meeting in Istanbul, will mean official recognition of the 'TRNC.' However, the Greek Foreign Ministry has asked ambassadors of Islamic countries in Athens to refrain from recognizing the 'TRNC,' "Cumhuriyet" reports."

EDITORIAL OPINION: Rumsfeld in Iraq

"War, Occupation and Torture" Erdal Guven opined in the liberal-intellectual Radikal (5/14): "As a follower of developments in Iraq, I supported the Iraq war and the occupation. I thought the war would not only end a terrible period -- the Saddam era -- but also would provide hope for Iraq's future based on America's commitment to democracy and stability. This was enough to keep up my hopes, because it could have paved the way for a democratization process across the Middle East. . There were some 'tolerable' mistakes along the way as the US occupation went on in Iraq, including the inadequate planning for post-war Iraq. . However, the recent photos from Iraqi prisons simply cannot be tolerated. This is not abuse carried out by a few crazed US soldiers. This is systematic torture as stated in the official reports. . Rumsfeld is wrong to say that publishing torture photos is a violation of the Geneva Conventions. The Geneva Conventions are about preventing torture and abuse, not about preventing media coverage. Rumsfeld's approach to the torture issue is a clear indication that the Administration is turning its back on American values."

"Could This Be Happening in the 21st Century?" Sami Kohen observed in the mass appeal Milliyet (5/14): "Lately, I find it impossible to watch the news on TV. The pictures and videos from Iraq are horrifying, startling and very depressing for the future. Is this really the world of the 21st century? What happened to compassion and tolerance for humanity? Where is international brotherhood and friendship? Doesn't this savagery take humanity back to the darkness of the middle ages? Watching these ugly incidents in Iraq (or elsewhere) on TV arouses indignation and shock among ordinary people. But it encourages people to think together and react together when all the news is open to the world. At least this is what happens in democracies. The American people are still suffering from the shock of these recent incidents. But at the same time, they are listening to their consciences. The impact of this will definitely shake the Bush Administration, and hopefully force Washington to reevaluate its policies."

EDELMAN